



Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology  
Mills/Jarrett Complex  
Box 101106  
Columbia, SC 29211

## **This is an official** **CDC Health Update**

Distributed via Health Alert Network  
March 22, 2003, 18:18 EDT (6:18 PM EDT)  
CDCHAN-00126-03-03-22-UPD-N

### **UPDATED INTERIM U.S. SARS CASE DEFINITION**

For purposes of case finding and surveillance in the United States, the March 17th CDC SARS case definition has been updated as follows:

- Temperature must be measured
- SARS areas are limited to those with suspected or documented community transmission; this differs from the WHO definition as it excludes areas where secondary transmission has been limited to only health care workers or direct household contacts. Note: the list of SARS areas will be updated as new information becomes available.

#### **Suspected Case:**

Respiratory illness of unknown etiology with onset since February 1, 2003, and the following criteria:

- Measured temperature  $>100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$  ( $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$ )
- One or more clinical findings of respiratory illness (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, hypoxia, or radiographic findings of either pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome)

- Travel within 10 days of onset of symptoms to an area with suspected or documented community transmission of SARS (see list below; excludes areas with secondary cases limited to healthcare workers or direct household contacts)

OR

- Close contact\* within 10 days of onset of symptoms with either a person with a respiratory illness and travel to a SARS area or a person under investigation or suspected of having SARS

\* Close contact is defined as having cared for, having lived with, or having had direct contact with respiratory secretions and /or body fluids of a patient suspected of having SARS.

List of areas with documented or suspected community transmission of SARS: Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Guangdong province, Peoples' Republic of China; Hanoi, Vietnam; and Singapore

Note: Suspect cases with either radiographic evidence of pneumonia or respiratory distress syndrome; or evidence of unexplained respiratory distress syndrome by autopsy are designated "probable" cases by the WHO case definition.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Received 03/22/03 Posted 03/24/03